

CHAPTER BEST PRACTICE

We believe that the practices of a Chapter have a direct effect on the membership levels. In our opinion best practice can be summed up by the following values in our Chapters:

- C** Companionship.
- H** Happiness
- A** Activity
- P** Planning
- T** Teamwork
- E** Encouragement
- R** Respect

Companionship. We are all companions on a journey of discovery and should always treat each other as such. The loss of any companion is a great loss, but a loss through an avoidable resignation is a failure by the Chapter.

Happiness. Attending our Chapter is a pastime which we do for pleasure. The overall atmosphere of the ceremony and the festive board should be happy, friendly and welcoming to all. Music greatly adds ambience and gravitas to a ceremony.

Activity. A common reason for resignation is a lack of meaningful activity in the Chapter. Every Convocation should be special with a minimum of two Exaltations per annum.

Planning. Every Chapter should carefully plan its future. The content of each Convocation should always be well planned by the Scribe E and Director of Ceremonies. The quality of the ceremonial greatly affects the enjoyment and therefore the attendance of the companions. It should be prepared and well rehearsed. The ritual is intended to be learnt and ritual books used only by prompters.

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Teamwork. The work should be shared by as many Companions as is possible with a sense of teamwork. Wherever possible the 'fixed' officers in the Chapter should change on a regular basis. This provides a freshness of approach and an opportunity for others. For those unable to learn the ritual there are many opportunities for the reading of prayers and scriptures. Every member should feel valued, needed and part of the team.

Encouragement. Each Companion should be encouraged to progress through the offices and in due course take the chairs. It is acknowledged that some Companions find ritual difficult to learn but this should not be a bar to progress. In such cases the Companion should arrange with the DC to deliver what they are able, with others to fill the gaps. A Chapter Almoner should be appointed to keep regular contact with all members and particularly those not attending.

Respect. We should respect the individual circumstances of each Companion and thereby the contribution he is able to make to the Chapter. A Companion who attends his Chapter and apologises if he is unavoidably absent, is still a valued member. While participation in the administrative or ceremonial aspects is recommended, it should not be considered as a necessity. Every member should feel proud to be a Royal Arch Companion.

The Provincial Grand Scribe Ezra is always happy to offer advice or arrange assistance. His contact details are as follows:-

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2017 – 2021

OUR PROVINCIAL STRATEGY AT A GLANCE

Initiation to Exaltation, the
complete journey in pure
Antient Freemasonry

OUR VISION IS

- A vibrant Royal Arch in Nottinghamshire driven by healthy and happy Chapters.
- A province that demonstrates the preliminary declaration of the Constitutions and encourages every mason to complete the stages of Antient Masonry; Initiation, Passing, Raising and Exaltation.

OUR GOALS ARE

- To enlighten those brethren yet to complete their journey in Antient Masonry and encourage them to be Exalted into the Royal Arch in Nottinghamshire.
- To encourage the Chapters of the province to adopt best practice that they may be well placed to welcome new members and maintain the interests of its Companions.
- To offer education that Companions may better understand the meaning and purpose of the Royal Arch.
- To improve the quality of ceremonial within the Royal Arch that Companions may better enjoy and understand its meaning.
- To provide guidance, support and encouragement to the Chapters of the province to help them survive and thrive.
- To encourage Craft Masons who have been previously lost to the Royal Arch to re-join the Royal Arch and renew our Companionship.
- To help establish strategies in Chapters that they may achieve their own and the Province's objectives.

OUR OBJECTIVES ARE

- To return our membership to at least 1000 Companions by the end of 2018.
- To have 40% of Craft Masons as Companions of the Royal Arch by 2021.
- To increase recruitment to 7% of our membership per annum by the end 2018.
- To decrease our resignations to 3% of our membership per annum by the end of 2018.
- To retrieve 5% per annum of the Craft masons who have been lost to the Royal Arch by the end of 2018.

OUR APPROACH IS

- To coordinate our efforts on recruitment, retention and retrieval of our membership in a group named the Membership Focus Group. The MFG are directly responsible to the Provincial Executive and will analyse data and recommend actions.
- To appoint and maintain a Royal Arch Representative in every Craft Lodge. The Representative is trained and equipped to provide members of the Lodge with information about the Royal Arch and all the Chapters within the province. The Representative is focused on the achievement of our objectives.
- To invite master masons not in the Royal Arch to attend an education evening held on a regular basis around the province.
- To ensure every new master mason receives a joint letter from the Provincial Grand Master and the Grand Superintendent congratulating him on his raising and recommending the Royal Arch as his next step.

OUR APPROACH IS

- To offer to Craft Lodges interesting lectures and presentations (e.g. Talking Heads) about the Royal Arch.
- To maintain under the auspices of the Nottinghamshire Sojourners a library of educational lectures and interactive sessions and make them available to Chapters.
- To maintain a register of Companions with proven skills in the Royal Arch and making them available to Chapters struggling to fill key ceremonial roles.
- To encourage every Chapter to appoint an Almoner to address the pastoral needs of the Companions and become properly trained to recognise and address at an early stage, problems in attendance that could develop into a resignation.
- To publish handbooks describing the role and duties of key Chapter officers e.g. Scribe Ezra, Director of Ceremonies, Almoner.
- To communicate effectively with the Chapter Scribes Ezra and formally via the General Purposes Committee.
- To assign a member of Supreme Grand Chapter as the Grand Chapter Visiting Officer (GCVO) for every chapter, who is friendly and approachable, provides an effective communication channel between the Chapter and the province and helps to make each meeting even more special.